1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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call the great gods. Apanto's spirit is strong, but Bayo has strong gods, too."

The machine was made ready for him, and Bayo sat down on a convenient box, his head bent over the tumao drum which we had acquired and which his fingers could scarce ever be near but that they played on it.

"It is not the right drum," he said. "You should have an apinti for me to speak to the gods. But I will try it with this one. Tomorrow I will go up the river to Djamungo. I know a man who has an apinti. You will give me money, and I will buy it for you. But now I will speak on the tumao."

He began the irregular tapping which we had learned to identify as the drum language. With one hand he carried the message, while with the other he played irrelevant motifs which served to confound anyone not initiated and leave him, as it left us, who had worked out some of the general principles on which this drum language was based, utterly unable to interpret it or to tell which were the significant elements.

"The great gods will look after your machine now, if they will listen to the tumao."

The next day Bayo went upstream to get us the apinti we so desired. He was not successful, but the gods had listened to him, when he had invoked them on the tumao, for Bayo's ministrations ended all trouble with our recalcitrant phonograph. Bayo indeed had strong spirits!

As the days went on, and record after record was put on the turntable, and with its tracing of songs, or examples of Bush Negro speech, or fragments of the rhythms that called the various gods, was taken off and carefully put into its felt-lined box, Bayo visibly swelled with pride. This was his doing! With his strong spirits he had called the great gods! He was young, and he had not spoken on the proper drum, but they had listened to him! So his thoughts went, and so he would repeat them to us.

His interest in the phonograph was intensified the more he saw of it, and he sang and spoke and drummed, either

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361 river floods periodically, and might wipe them out if they were too near, and that the Bush Negro still retains, back in his mind, a strong fear of another war with the white man. In the latter event the Djuka villages would have to be camouflaged or hidden. Often, too, the villages are to be found just above a waterfall or rapids, as another hindrance to possible invaders.

648 609 [576] At the landing we see bare-breasted Djuka women washing clothes or bathing their children. They do not evince much curiosity as we paddle up, for it is considered insolent to stare. The naked little ones are very much afraid of the white man. They scurry into the underbrush and watch us from behind trees. The older children remain and are proud of their courage. An old man is making a canoe. Most of the men are away on hunting or lumbering expeditions.

361 648 [417] Leading up to the village is a winding path, cut by the violent rain until it resembles a ravine. Sometimes the river floods the path, forming a little muddy inlet into which the canoes stick their noses. One town is perched on a high bank, reached only by a hardwood ladder twenty-five feet tall. The blacks clamber up easily, unlike the awkward white man, who has difficulty with the missing steps.

We ascend the path; the frightened children return to their play, paddling about or fishing from the moored canoes.

202 648 [534] Sometimes the bahkra's coming has been announced beforehand by a system of drum telegraphy. A certain rhythm beaten on the tomtom informs the adjacent villages that white men are coming up the river, and why. In this way

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their arrival is frequently anticipated. But it is something of an exaggeration to say that this primitive telegraphy is so extensive and efficient as to spread news of the white man over "more than two thousand square miles of impassable land." Nothing of the sort happens. The sound of the drums will carry for about two or three miles, when the wind is in the right direction, and the drum call is relayed from town to town. Most often, however, they are not beaten at all for us, and we arrive unannounced.

At the landing we are met by Captain Abaisa, a splendidly built Djuka whose friendship was obtained on a previous trip. His powerful body is all cut up with ornamental scars, a form of personal decoration highly esteemed by the Bush Negroes. The custom is a direct heritage from West Africa, found in many parts of the Gold Coast, the Congo country, and Cameroons, but unknown among the Indians of the Guianas. Abaisa greets us cordially: *"You wicki bah?" "E-e ah, matti"* is the proper reply. This talkee-talkee greeting, the equivalent of "Did you wake well?" is chanted rather than spoken. The voice ascends sharply on the second word, the final word being drawn out in a high sustained tone. The reply means "Yes, friend."

Another form of greeting is *"Ah broko baka,"* or "The day breaks again"—in other words—we meet again; or *"Neetee kaba"*—"The night is finished."

If a person is met for the second time within a short interval, the proper thing to say is *"We meetee baka."* Still another greeting is *"Bala, (Sis, Da, Ma) odio, how fa you de*

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796 centre clearing, no longer caring, no longer entirely con-
535 scious, their bodies driven by the rhythm of the drums.
158 No man has yet danced. Now a young buck of nineteen jumps into the centre and begins the *awasa* dance. His movements simulate the flying of a hawk, arms out like wings, pirouetting gracefully. His bare feet stamp the earth, hard enough, it seems, to break his bones. Another man joins him, waving his arms at full length, like an eagle in flight. They chant in talkee-talkee an *awasa* song:

"Fooru mo luku bon nanga ahga."

[539] It means: The fowl must be careful of the hawk; in other words, the girls must be careful of the men. They circle from the waist like birds soaring into the blue.

796 Now a man begins dancing toward a woman. She re-
832 treats. No dancer has yet touched another, or even noticed another. But this one is making definite love advances to the woman. He mimics coitus. Coyly she evades his approaches, and will have none of his movements. They are not serious. When she definitely refuses his copulatory advances, the drums stop. He takes a drum from one of the men, puts it under his arm, and follows her, dancing around the clearing, beating out a message of love. They weave a pattern of movement, in and out, in this dance of courtship to the lone muttering tambour.

● [202] There is a halt. The drummers rap out a message to other canoes coming up the river, telling them to hurry. Soon more strangers arrive for the final round.

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their remote villages, the Bush Negroes do as they please. The punitive powers of the white government are seldom exercised. Occasionally in Djuka land, as elsewhere, a murder occurs over some woman. Once or twice the Dutch have made an effort to arrest the criminal. But on the whole police jurisdiction is impossible, as any person familiar with the impenetrable bush and impassable rivers will easily realize. What occurs in any but the nearby villages is largely unknown.

Once the white authorities were cognizant of a murder that took place in Biodoti, one of Jankoeso's villages, and demanded the murderer for trial. With more sympathy for their own people who are criminals than for the white people who are judges, the Djukas flatly refused to give the man up. The Dutch colonial troops threw a cordon across the river just below Biodoti, refusing thoroughfare to any Bush Negro corials; this blockade would be enforced, they said, until the murderer was handed over. During the night Djuka corials leaked past the cordon; it was difficult to stop them. The Governor sent word to Jankoeso to come down to Paramaribo for an extraordinary parley. His refusal was brought by his personal messengers, his *lamba,* who are specially trained from childhood to carry long messages in their heads, keeping every word intact. The Governor informed these lamba that unless Jankoeso came willingly a detachment of troops would be sent to get him down by force.

Indignantly the Granman came, referring to himself as

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538 The Djukas possess, in common with many other primitive tribes, a number of trickster stories. They are called *anansi-stories,* and are usually concerned with the adventures of a clever spider, who outwits all the other animals. They resemble closely the Br'er Rabbit tales of the Negro of the [171] southern United States. These are West African themes, and can be found not only in the Carolinas and in Surinam, but scattered also throughout the West Indies. In the middle of the last century a collection of these stories was made among the Town Negroes of Paramaribo.

173 As most primitives possess no writing materials or technique, their knowledge is necessarily passed on by word of mouth, which imposes a severe limitation upon its possible extent. History, for the Djukas, starts with the rebellion, and of what came before they know little and care less. If they have stories of the Creation, we did not hear them. One approach to written language is in the Aucaner nation, where 212 a few rudimentary symbols are carved on paddles or other implements, a form of symbol-writing (see Appendix B). [431] The implement is given to someone as a token of affection, the symbols constituting a greeting. Some of them may be seen in the illustrations of small paddles and pot-stirrers.

202 For communicating over a long distance, the Djukas use [177] a system of drum telegraphy. This they have brought over from their West African homeland. At the town of Biodoti the news of our expedition was sent upriver by being drummed out on a tomtom. Squatting over the reverberating *apenti,* the Djuka buck rapped out the peculiar rhythm that

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signifies the coming of the white man. The tomtoms carry 202 ●
as far as three miles on a clear night, and the distant listeners in the next village pick up the message and repeat it, thus relaying it on to villages further upstream. Simple messages can thus be carried for great distances by being relayed from town to town.

This method of communication is not in use all day long. The river is not constantly booming with calls. Only on particular occasions do the villages signal each other, as when some intruder makes his way up the river. Sometimes a village was warned beforehand of our arrival, but more usually our arrival took the villages by surprise. It is an exaggeration to say that the signalling announces the bahkra's coming "over more than two thousand square miles of impassable land." Drum telegraphy is more common among the Aucaners than among the other tribes.

For telegraphic purposes the rhythm is arranged in a code pattern of long and short beats. Some calls we heard were interpreted as signifying: "Call the captain," "Come at once, sick," and so on.

When no drum is available, the Bush Negroes sometimes sound out a message by pounding on the side of the beached corial with a stick tightly wrapped in rags. This produces a hollow, booming sound that carries far—an excellent substitute for the drums. This method is reminiscent of the African tomtoms of resonant boards built about a hollow centre, which boom loudly when struck with the butt of the hand.

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202 In communicating by means of a beached canoe, instead of a series of long and short beats, the drummer will imitate the pitch and rhythm of a spoken sentence. By striking in different places along the gunwale of the boat, tones of different pitch can be obtained, which mimic the sharply modulated intonation of spoken words in talkee-talkee. The listeners match the sounds with the words that they suggest. The device is too difficult to be widely used, but seems to serve well in emergencies.

551 The method of naming people among the Djukas is extremely curious. There is a superstitious fear of mentioning certain names among them. This is very probably of African origin. In slavery days, no Negro, when passing an estate, [552] would dare to mention its name until the estate had been passed. When we went over a falls in the river, we could learn its name only after the danger spot had been passed.

For personal names the Djukas have one which everyone may use and another which depends upon the day of the week on which the individual was born. This latter can be learned only after explicit inquiry and often not at all. There is also the secret name that strangers seldom know, if ever. [171] This custom of secret names is also prevalent among the Surinam Carib Indians and other primitives.

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torchlight. The Djukas have a rodent trap that is a direct African survival, found on both the West and East Coasts of Africa.

Stedman mentions in his *Narrative* that the Bush Negro rebels used a kind of conch-shell trumpet to call their people to arms. The same species of trumpet is still to be found among the Djukas, and is similar in type to those found on the Gold Coast. The nose flute used by the Bush Negroes also comes from the Congo region of Africa. Wooden trumpets like those used by the Bush Negroes are found also along the Gold Coast and in the Congo country.

The drums form perhaps the clearest and most characteristic West African survival. They are not at all like the Indian drums of the same region, which are flat and more like a tambourine. The Djuka manner of constructing them from a hollowed-out log, with skin stretched over the opening and thonged over pegs, is commonly in use among innumerable African tribes. The tuning of them by hammering on the pegs, set at an angle, is also a detail from Africa. The use of drums for communication over long distances, and the development of an elaborate code of drum signals, is developed to a high degree among West African tribes. Rattray, in his study of the Ashanti people, gives an extended description of this.

The *anansi-tories,* the spider stories, ubiquitous in the West Indies, are also found among the Tshi-speaking peoples of the West Coast. The use of white clay for smearing ceremonial objects and amulets is African. The decoration of

114 /30 cont./
648 in hiding a significant advantage for the colony, since the lack of workers in agriculture makes itself felt with increasing urgency.

202 Accordingly they promised to satisfy my wish by putting
[123] up the signs customary among them, which would make known to those in hiding my wishes to acquaint them with the good news.

In order to let those in hiding know that they were requested to come out of the forest, they go to work in the following manner.

202 They tie white and blue, also perhaps white and black
822 patches of cotton half an ell long and three thumbs wide in Rhineland fashion to the upper branches of the trees, starting in the deepest part of the forest and progressing to the river /31/ bank. The little flags placed highest are of a dark color, while the patches tied progressively lower toward the river are white.

Those in hiding, who stay in the district and cross through the forest to hunt, discover these signs and see by them that there is something going on; either that others in hiding want to establish contact with them or that they have to fear danger.

The manner in which the signs are attached to the trees makes them understand that if they go more deeply into the forest there will be born for them a dark and dangerous future, whereas, if they can decide to go to the river bank they can walk a white, that is, a bright path and that, following the little white flags, they will find people who either want to make common cause with them or wish to give them important information.

202 Since these persons in hiding are constantly afraid of
152 surprise attack or deception, trust in these signs is not always im-
648 mediately established and thus at first only some of them go down with cunning and caution. When they come into the more inhabited districts, they watch and investigate everything that they wish to know; frequently this investigation extends all the way to Paramaribo. Now the Bush Negroes thought that if they followed their custom in this it would be clear to them why these signs had been placed in the bush and that as a result of these they would very quickly become acquainted with the declared amnesty.

202 I must add here also that in fact many fugitives or
648 persons in hiding later came out of the forests, among whom must

/31 cont./

202 be mentioned in particular the man who caused so much of a stir,
648 Broos, chief of a camp of persons in hiding behind the plantation Rac a Rac, who came back followed by many.

I must confess that I have never seen this chief and was not involved in this event in any way; the question is, however, whether this Broos and his followers came back of their own accord, or whether they returned without fear of the Whites because of the reassuring signs set up at my request.

That the Bush Negroes attached to me complied with my request by the placing of /32/ signs is not to be doubted, but what outcome resulted from it cannot be said with certainty.

Chapter XXII

Deception Practiced toward Them

114 I said a few words in Chapter XX and earlier about the
648 deceptions that the Whites practiced with regard to the Bush Negroes. I was at first diffident about communicating the unvarnished truth about this. Since, however, this is not reported by me as being generally applicable, because, as in all things, here, too, favorable exceptions exist, I therefore regard it as my duty to make my experience known.

186 The Bush Negroes, it cannot be denied, as the result
648 of the manifold deceptions that they have experienced from the Europeans and other free inhabitants of this colony, have developed an aversion toward them. They therefore oppose deception with deception, and trick with trick.

439 It has become apparent to me that many of them, when
648 they arrive with timber rafts at the plantations in order to sell the timber, after having been deceived several times, make use of all kinds of tricks in order in their turn to deceive the Europeans. I leave now to one side the question as to which of the two parties is the principal or initiating cause and has the greater responsibility in these fraudulent transactions. When a family of Bush Negroes

/184/

765 [535] The buchiman execute the kwadyo dance, which seems to be an African war dance; they hold a stick in front of them and make the gesture of taking aim.

That lasts about half an hour.

The guests continue to arrive individually and settle themselves around the mortuary shed, seated on their little benches.

765 202 About three o'clock the drums begin to beat again. It is Bukuman, master of the art of speaking with the drum, who strikes the summons' formulas; the others give him the cue.

The drum speaks for a long time (1). An elder translates

> 1. It is more a question of conventional formulas than a language; two different sounds can be obtained from the drum by striking respectively with the fingers and with the palm.

for me approximately: "Other villages, be still, for there is a great festival in the grand man's village."

"We who are now living, we are going to do what our ancestors taught us long ago."

765 [551] Then the dead for whom mourning will be lifted are directly addressed, being called by name if they are men; for the women like Béniti, who cannot be called directly, for women do not have a drum-name, they call one of their deceased near relatives, here Diolé †, Béniti's brother: "Tell thy sister that we are going to part company with her, for we have been in mourning for her a long time and this is the custom, such as the ancestors did before us."

[769] "Ancestors, come, come near us, we are going to pour the tafia and cane juice for you."

[202] (Libations are made within the shed.) Then the drum addresses those present:

765 /184 cont./

[202] "You who with ɔbia so that the machete will not cut you, so that the broken glass will not wound you, what are you waiting for? You remain seated, are you afraid?"

765 786 787 At these words, several of those present stand up and begin to dance, seeking the trance of possession. Some run into the village and come back running, carrying banana-tree stalks. Others drag thorny spathes of awara; two brandish an old, demolished boat.

The drum furiously beats the rhythm of Kumenti. Part of the dancers, taken hold of by a furious delirium, jump and [824] prance about. Certain ones take thorny spathes of awara (2)

> 2. Thorny palm (astrocaryum vulgare) whose sharp thorns nearly 10 centimeters long are particularly formidable. It is impossible to pick up an awara spathe with bare hands without hurting oneself.

under the arm or pass them around the neck.

Part of those present are taken hold of in their turn by trances, including people of mature age and serious character like Fintiman, who is carried off in a faint.

Two possessed people, a man (Ernest, Kotika) and a woman (Awini, Boniville), smeared with pɛmba, are subject to extraordinary contortions. Ernest breaks a bottle over his head with such force that the pieces fly several meters. Both /185/ dance on their knees for an appreciable length of time (but the next day Awini will come to have herself cared for). Those present manifest frenzied joy.

765 535 534 About five o'clock the sɔ̃ŋgɛ dance begins. Three apinti drums are placed at the west wall of the shed. The orchestra is completed by an old overturned boat which seven to eight men strike with sticks.